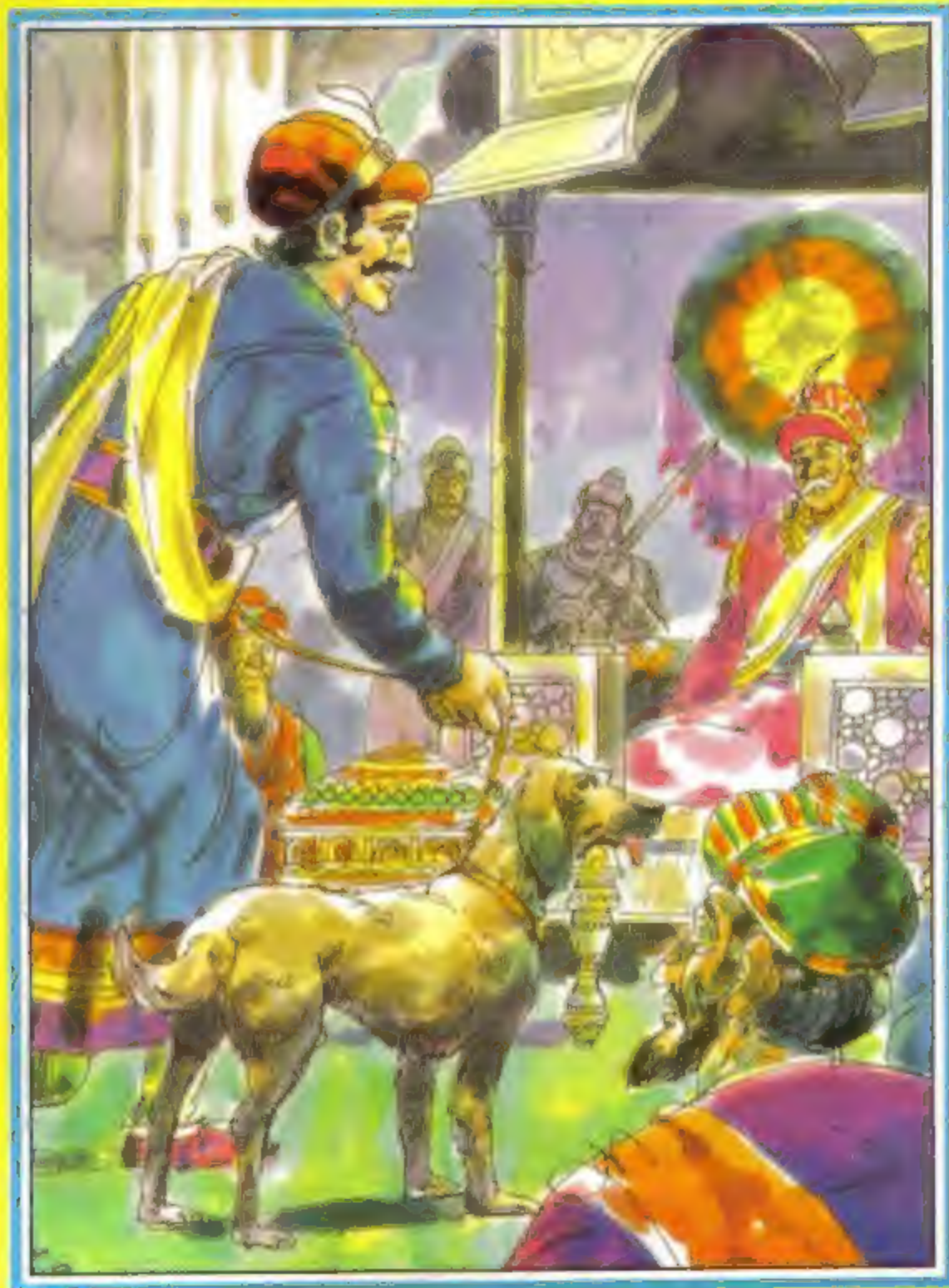




# The Inimitable Birbal

Vol. 580 Rs. 25



Amar Chitra Katha: the Glorious Heritage of India



# PANDIT GANGARAM

BIRBAL HAD GAINED THE REPUTATION OF BEING A SKILFUL SOLVER OF PROBLEMS. ONE DAY, A BRAHMIN CALLED GANGARAM CAME TO HIM.

BIRBAL SAHIB, I HAVE A PROBLEM WHICH ONLY YOU CAN SOLVE.

WHAT IS IT?

I AM A BRAHMIN BY BIRTH. MY FOREFATHERS WERE GREAT SANSKRIT SCHOLARS. EVERYONE CALLED THEM PANDITS.

YES, I REMEMBER YOUR FATHER.

I HAVE NEITHER MUCH LEARNING NOR WEALTH.

DO YOU WANT ME TO HELP YOU GET WORK?

NO, I AM CONTENTED WITH MY LIFE. BUT I HAVE JUST ONE WISH. I WANT PEOPLE TO ADDRESS ME AS PANDIT.

IS THAT ALL? YOU ONLY WANT TO BE CALLED PANDIT?

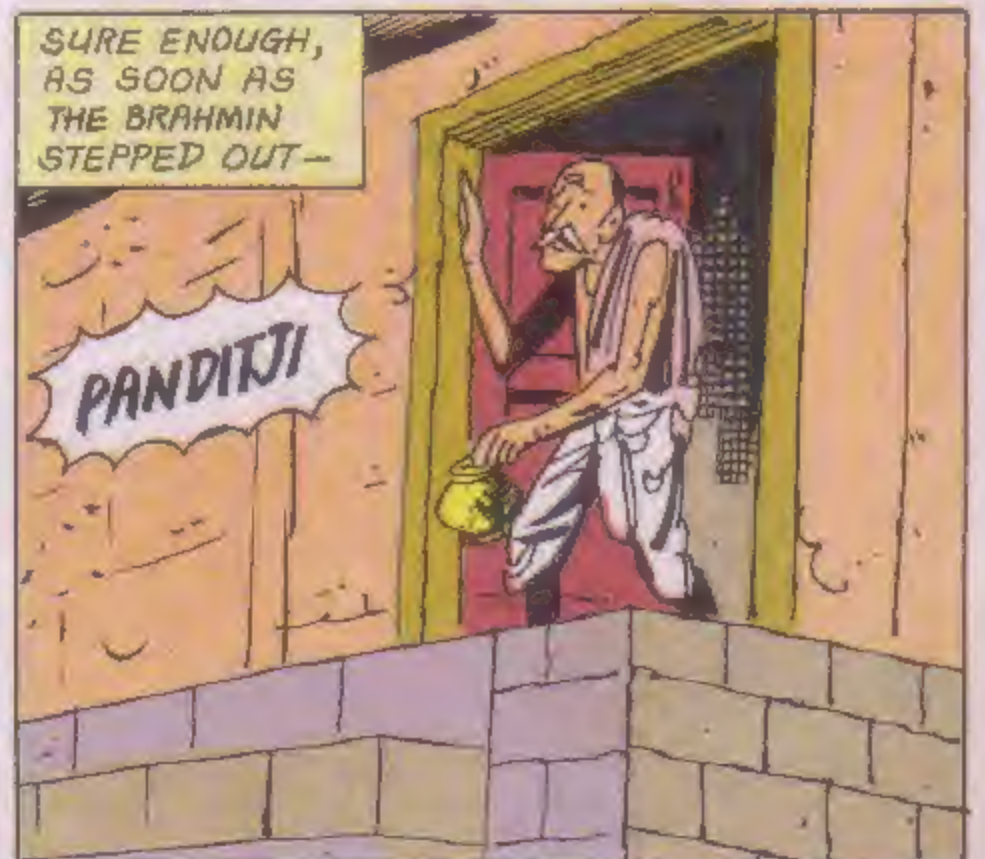
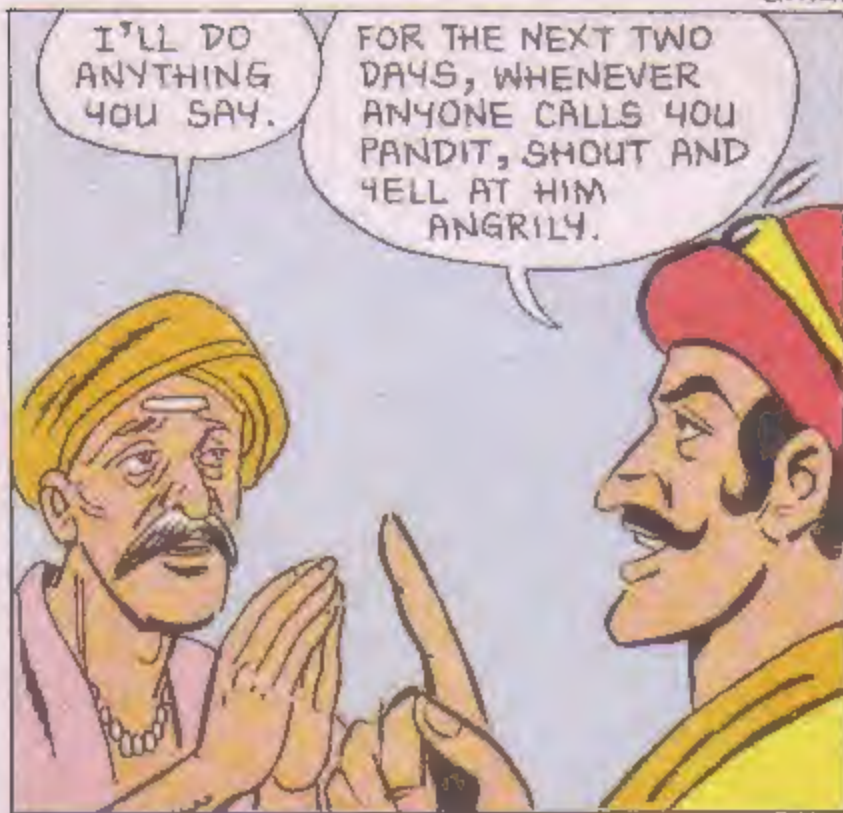
YES. I KNOW IT IS DIFFICULT. BUT NO TASK IS DIFFICULT FOR YOU.

I CAN DO IT IN JUST TWO DAYS.

YOU MEAN EVERYONE WILL BEGIN TO CALL ME PANDIT IN JUST TWO DAYS?

WELL, MAYBE THREE. BUT YOU MUST FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS.

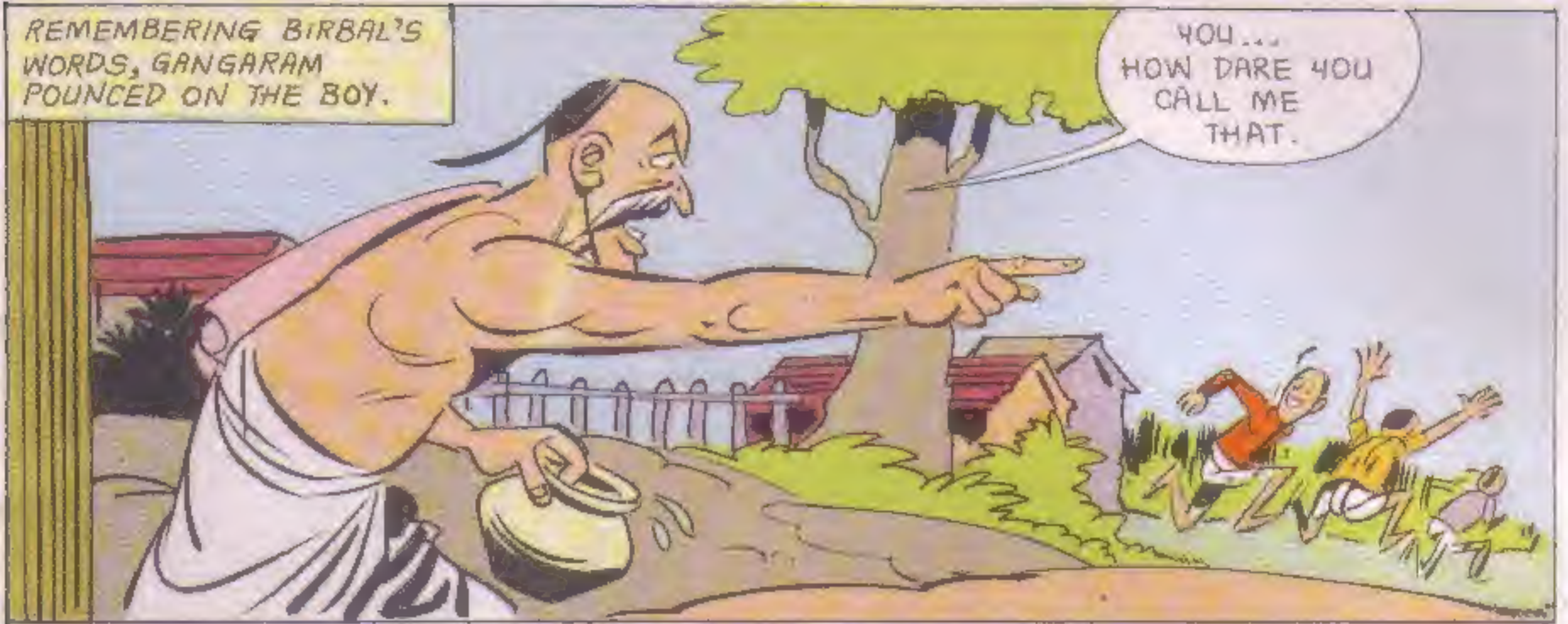






REMEMBERING BIRBAL'S WORDS, GANGARAM POUNCED ON THE BOY.

YOU... HOW DARE YOU CALL ME THAT.



NOW THE OTHER BOYS TOOK UP THE CUE.

PANDITJI!

OHH PANDITJI!



EACH TIME THEY SHOUTED, GANGARAM WOULD CHASE THEM, BRANDISHING HIS STICK.

WAIT TILL I CATCH YOU!



IT BECAME A POPULAR PASTIME IN BARA CHOWK.

YOU WANT TO HAVE SOME FUN? JUST CALL THAT MAN 'PANDITJI'!



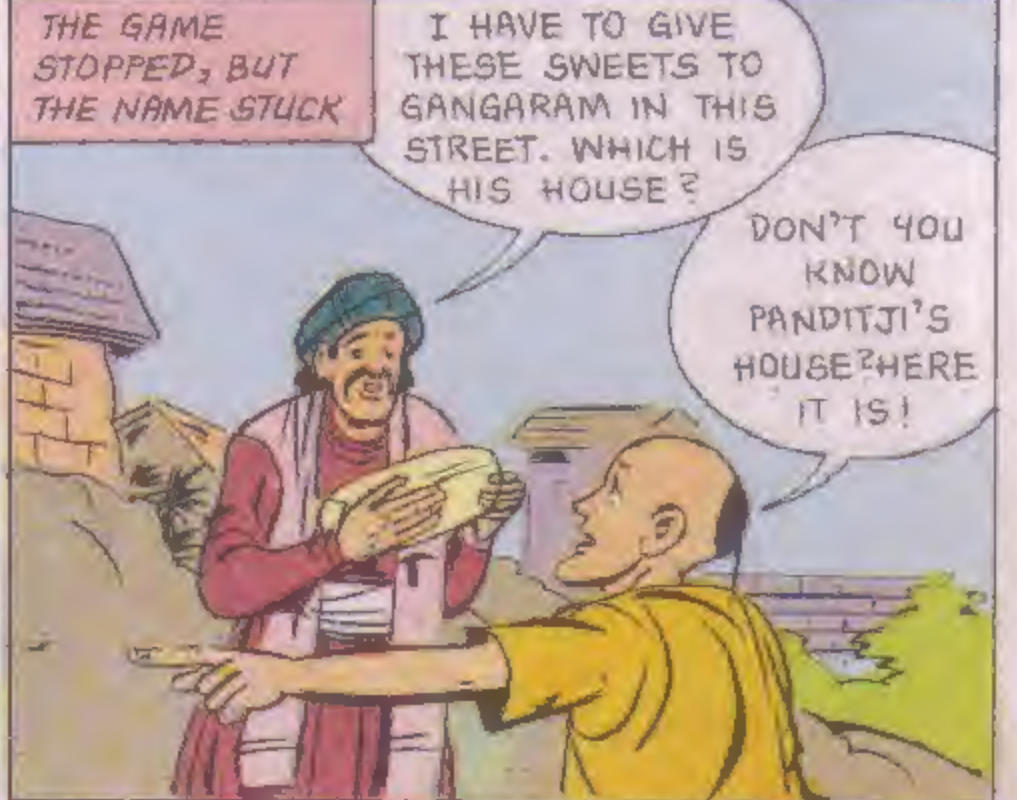
SOON, HOWEVER, THEY TIRED OF THE GAME BECAUSE GANGARAM STOPPED ABUSING THEM.



THE GAME STOPPED, BUT THE NAME STUCK

I HAVE TO GIVE THESE SWEETS TO GANGARAM IN THIS STREET. WHICH IS HIS HOUSE?

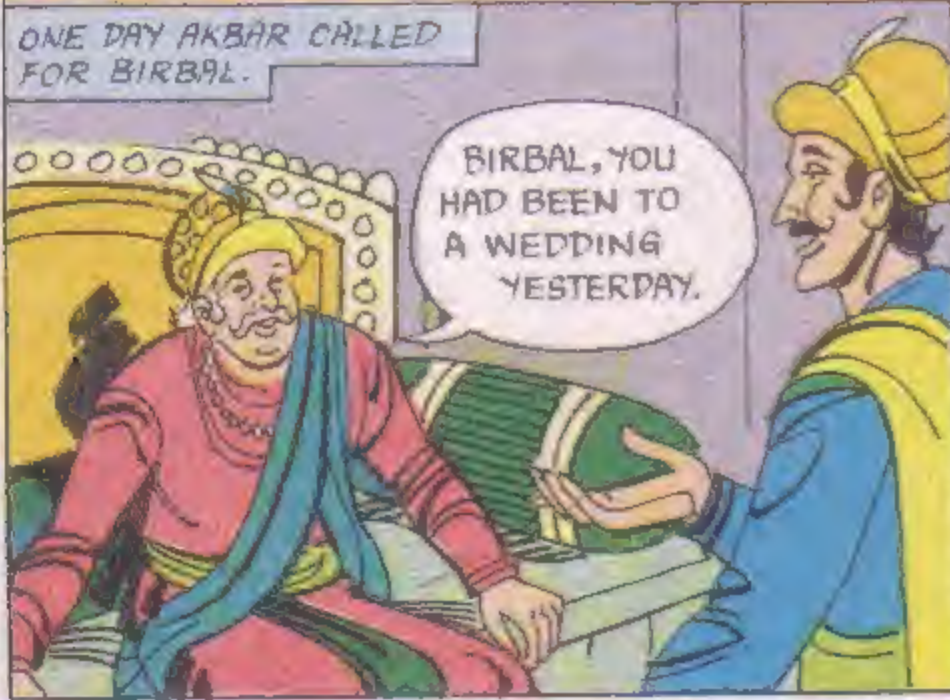
DON'T YOU KNOW PANDITJI'S HOUSE? HERE IT IS!





# AND CURRY OF COURSE

ONE DAY AKBAR CALLED FOR BIRBAL.



JUST THEN, A COURTIER INTERRUPTED WITH AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR THE EMPEROR, AND THE CONVERSATION REMAINED UNFINISHED. NEXT DAY IN THE DURBAR, AKBAR WANTED TO TEST BIRBAL'S MEMORY. HE TURNED TO HIM -



BIRBAL REALISED THAT AKBAR WAS REFERRING TO THE CONVERSATION OF THE PREVIOUS DAY. PROMPTLY HE SAID -





AKBAR WAS IMMENSELY PLEASED.

WAH! BIRBAL. YOU ARE INDEED GREAT. HERE! TAKE THIS PEARL NECKLACE.

THE COURTIER'S PRESENT WERE PERPLEXED.

WHY, THE KING MUST REALLY BE FOND OF CURRY. HE GAVE BIRBAL A PRESENT JUST FOR MENTIONING THE WORD CURRY.

AFTER THE COURT HAD DISPERSED, THEY GOT TOGETHER FOR DISCUSSIONS.

WE MUST BRING THE BEST CURRY FOR THE EMPEROR TOMORROW.

YES, LOTS OF IT.

SURELY HE WILL REWARD US TOO

THE NEXT DAY THEY ARRIVED IN THE DURBAR WITH THEIR SERVANTS CARRYING HUGE URNS OF CURRY ON THEIR HEADS.

WHAT'S ALL THIS? WHAT ARE THESE MEN CARRYING TO THE COURT?

WE HAVE BROUGHT CURRY FOR YOU, JAHANPANAH. WE KNOW NOW HOW MUCH YOU LIKE IT.

AKBAR UNDERSTOOD AT ONCE —

YOU FOOLS! WHAT BIRBAL SAID YESTERDAY WAS IN ANOTHER CONTEXT. AS A PUNISHMENT FOR YOUR STUPIDITY I WILL MAKE YOU EAT ALL THIS CURRY JUST NOW.

FORGIVE US! WE WILL NOT ACT IN HASTE NEXT TIME

BIRBAL HAD A GOOD LAUGH



# THE ONLY ROOSTER

AKBAR LOVED TO PLAY  
HARMLESS TRICKS ON  
BIRBAL

SO MANY  
TIMES HAVE I  
TRIED TO TRAP HIM,  
BUT HE ALWAYS  
GETS THE BETTER  
OF ME

THIS TIME  
I WILL GET  
EVEN WITH  
HIM

THE NEXT DAY AT THE COURT, HE SENT  
BIRBAL ON AN ERRAND ADDRESSING  
THE REST OF THE COURTIER, AKBAR  
SAID—

HERE IS  
A BASKET OF EGGS.  
I WANT EACH ONE OF  
YOU TO TAKE AN EGG  
AND KEEP IT HIDDEN

LATER, WHEN I ASK YOU TO  
DIVE INTO THE POOL, YOU  
MUST PRETEND YOU FOUND  
IT THERE—  
UNDERSTOOD?

YES,  
JAHANPANAH

QUEER IDEAS  
HIS MAJESTY  
HAS

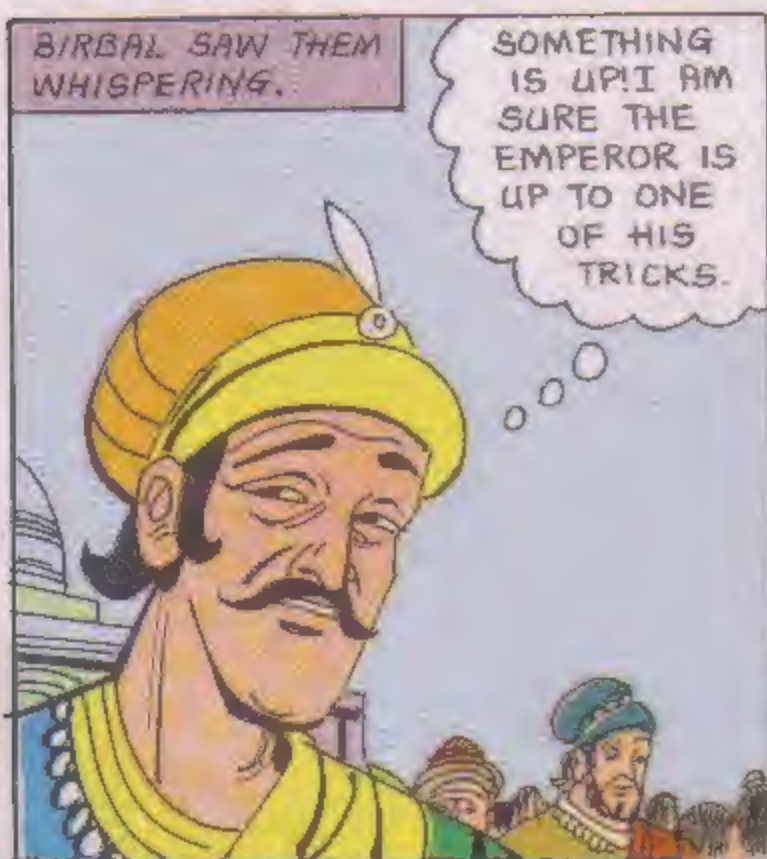
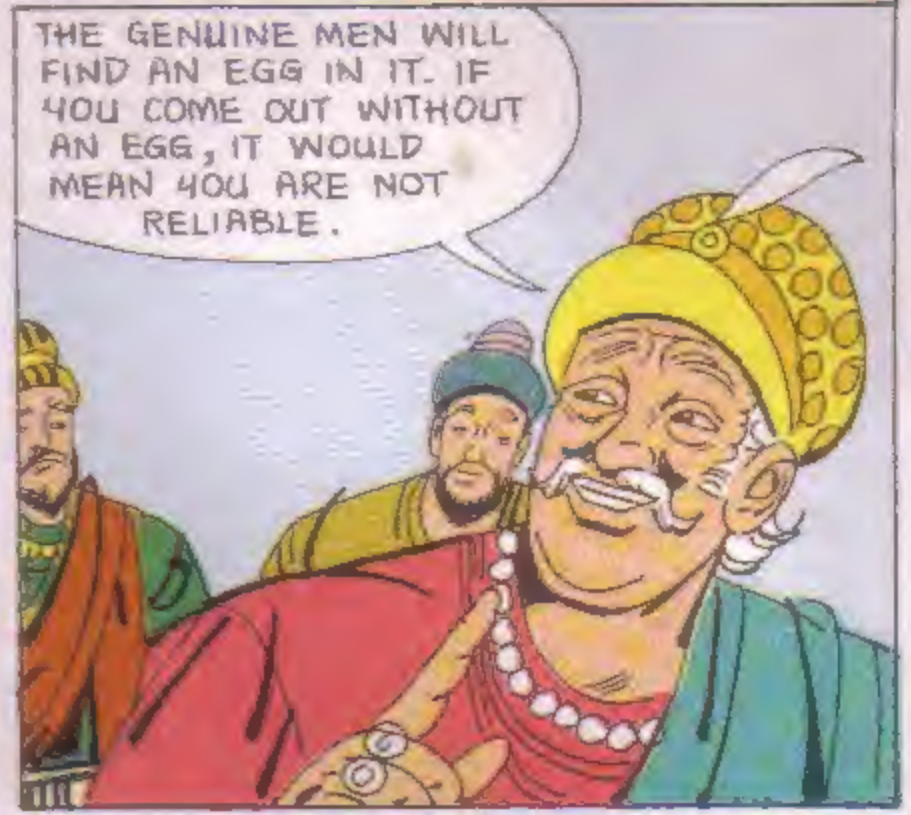
BETTER  
HUMOUR HIM  
AND DO AS  
HE SAYS

MUST  
BE A NEW  
GAME HE  
HAS THOUGHT  
OF

BUT WHEN BIRBAL RETURNED  
TO THE COURT, THEY  
UNDERSTOOD

BIRBAL,  
YESTERDAY I HAD  
A STRANGE DREAM. FROM IT  
I GOT AN EXCELLENT IDEA  
FOR TESTING THE  
ABILITIES OF THE MEN  
OF MY COURT.











AFTER SHAKING THE WATER OFF HIS BODY, HE STOOD UP.

COCK-A-DOODLE DOO!  
COCK-A-DOODLE DOO!



WHERE'S YOUR EGG, BIRBAL? WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU CROWING FOR?



BIRBAL REPLIED —

SURELY YOU KNOW THAT ONLY HENS LAY EGGS, NOT COCKS.



YOU HAVE A LARGE BROOD OF HENS, HUZOOR.



BUT I AM THE ONLY ROOSTER!



THE COURTIERS FELT VERY EMBARRASSED.

HA HA! TRULY BIRBAL, YOU ARE REALLY ONE OF A KIND!





# PARTING OF FRIENDS

ONE DAY, WHILE  
SALIM WAS AWAY  
ON A MISSION,  
HE MET A GROUP  
OF MEN WHO  
WERE HIS FRIENDS

I AM A LITTLE  
WORRIED ABOUT  
MY FRIEND SALIM

WHY?

HE IS A  
FINE  
BOY

HE IS  
HAPPY &  
TOO



HE IS A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT HIS FRIEND SALIM

YES, I KNOW  
HE IS A GOOD  
BOY, BUT  
LATELY, HE HAS  
FALLEN INTO  
BAD  
COMPANY



HE IS A LITTLE WORRIED  
ABOUT HIS  
FRIEND

YES, THAT  
IS THE  
PROBLEM

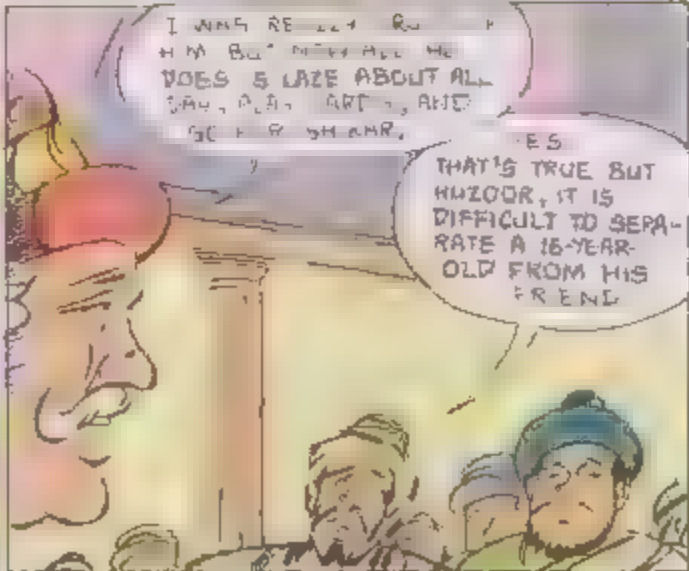


SALIM HAD LEARNT  
THE ROYAL DUTIES  
SO WELL



I AM REALLY  
HAPPY BECAUSE HE  
DOES & LAZE ABOUT ALL  
DAY, PLAY, ART, AND  
GET A SHAMR,

YES  
THAT'S TRUE BUT  
HOWEVER, IT IS  
DIFFICULT TO SEPA-  
RATE A 16-YEAR-  
OLD FROM HIS  
FRIEND





THAT IS WHY I AM  
CONSULTING YOU AFTER  
ALL, AS THE PRINCE,  
HIS FUTURE IS YOUR  
CONCERN TOO.

WE  
WILL TRY  
TO FIND  
A WAY

36 A WHILE MONTH PASSED NO ONE COULD  
FIND A WAY TO CORRECT THE PRINCE

HUZOOR SEND YASIN  
AWAY TO ANOTHER  
PLACE

NO, THAT  
WILL ONLY TURN  
SAJIM AGAINST  
ME

WHY NOT TELL  
THE PRINCE  
YOU THINK  
YASIN IS

NO, M RZA,  
THAT MIGHT  
MAKE SAJIM  
MORE FOND  
OF HIM

WHEN BARBA RETURNED  
FROM HIS TRAVELS, ARBAH  
TURNED TO HIM FOR HELP

YOU WANT TO SEPARATE  
THE TWO YOUNG MEN  
WHY, GIVE ME JUST  
TEN DAYS

NEXT DAY, AT COURT BARBA TOLD  
YASIN

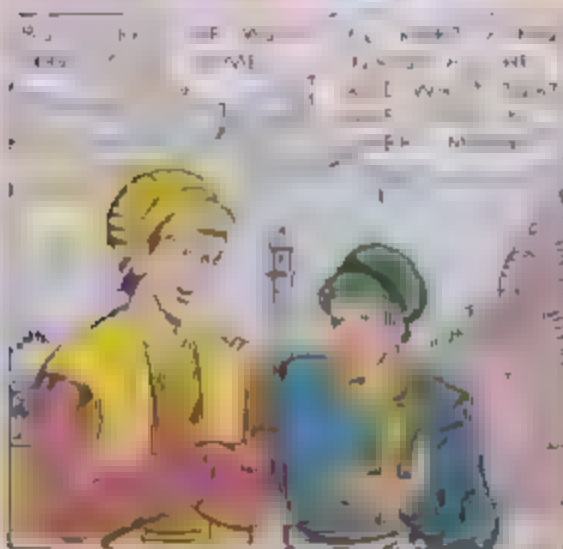
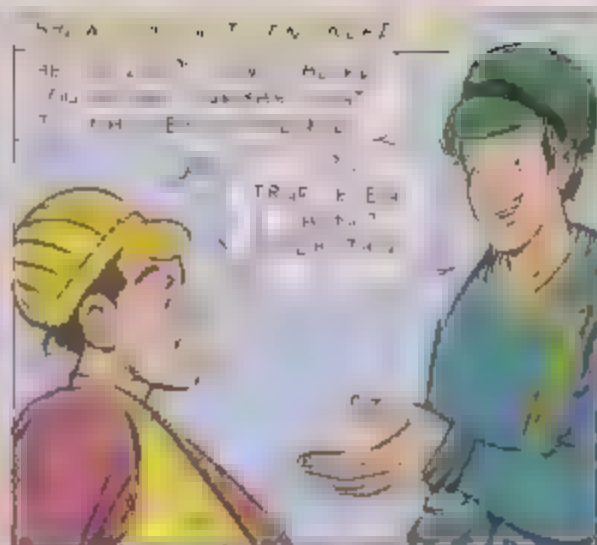
(BZZZZ)

ALSO HE SAID -

NOW, DON'T  
BREATHE  
A WORD OF THIS  
TO ANYONE

BARBA  
MUST BE GOING CRAZY  
HE JUST SAID,  
"JUST ONE SEED  
IN EVERY  
I MANGER"

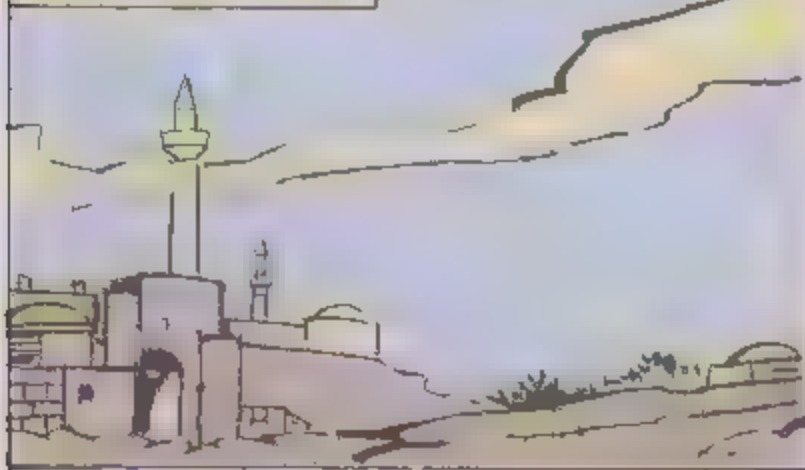






# THE PHASES OF THE MOON

ONCE AKBAR SENT BIRBAL TO KABUL ON A SECRET ROYAL MISSION.



BIRBAL TRIED TO MINGLE WITH THE LOCAL CROWD, BUT—

I SUSPECT THAT MAN! HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE AN ORDINARY PERSON.

YES, THOUGH HE POSES TO BE ONE OF US, HE IS OBVIOUSLY AN OUTSIDER.



WHY, HE MUST BE A SPY.



LET'S REPORT HIM TO OUR KING



THE KING ORDERED THE SUSPECTED SPY TO BE BROUGHT BEFORE HIM

TELL ME TRULY. WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU HERE?



I AM JUST A TRAVELLER

I HAVE TRAVELLED THROUGH MANY KINGDOMS AND ARRIVED HERE.

IS THAT SO?



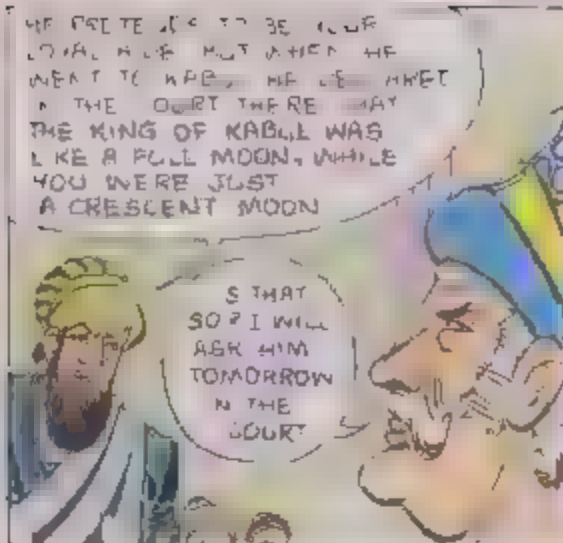
WELL, SINCE YOU HAVE TRAVELLED SO MUCH AND SEEN SO MUCH OF THE WORLD, TELL ME, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MY RULE?













# VALUE OF WASTE

ONE DAY IN THE COURT—

SEE THIS EXCELLENT VASE!

NO, IT'S A LITTLE CHIPPED. NEVER SHOW ME ANYTHING BROKEN.

BIRBAL INTERVENED —

WHY, HUZOOR?

SURELY, BIRBAL, YOU KNOW THAT ANYTHING THAT IS BROKEN, CRUSHED OR ROTTEN IS OF NO USE TO ANYONE

SOMETIMES MAYBE, BUT THAT IS NOT ALWAYS TRUE.

PROVE IT TO ME, BIRBAL

THE JUICE WE GET FROM SUGARCANE BY BREAKING AND CRUSHING GIVES SUGAR, JAGGERY AND DELICIOUS SWEETS, FIT TO BE A DIVINE OFFERING.

THE COTTON POD BURSTS FORTH TO YIELD THE COTTON STRING. CLOTHES MADE FROM ITS SPINNING AND WEAVING ARE FIT FOR EVEN A KING

THE ROTTEN DECAYING RAGS, OLD JUTE AND OTHER WASTES YIELD PAPER FOR THE SACRED QURAN AS WELL AS OUR PURANAS.

INDEED THAT'S TRUE, BIRBAL. EVERYTHING HAS ITS USE, EVEN THE BROKEN, CRUSHED AND ROTTEN STUFF.



# THE TRUE OWNER

AS I SPEAK TO HIM HE  
THINKS I AM THE  
TRUE OWNER

HE TOLD ME  
ALTOUR

CALM DOWN!  
WHAT DO YOU  
WANT TO  
DO?



AFTER BIRBAL HEARD HIS STORY HE  
TOLD THE BOATMAN AND HIS CREW

WHY ARE YOU  
HAYAS? IS THIS  
WATER? IS THIS  
BACK HIS  
GOODS?

MUZOR,  
THEY ARE MY  
GOODS. I AM  
A TRADER. MY  
BOAT AND MY  
GOODS ARE  
MY OWN

THE BOATMAN ANSWERED  
HE SAID

YES,  
THE GOODS  
BELONG TO  
YOUR SHIP







THE TRADER NOW TURNED TO HIS MUNIM WHO WAS IN REALITY BIRBAL IN DISGUISE.

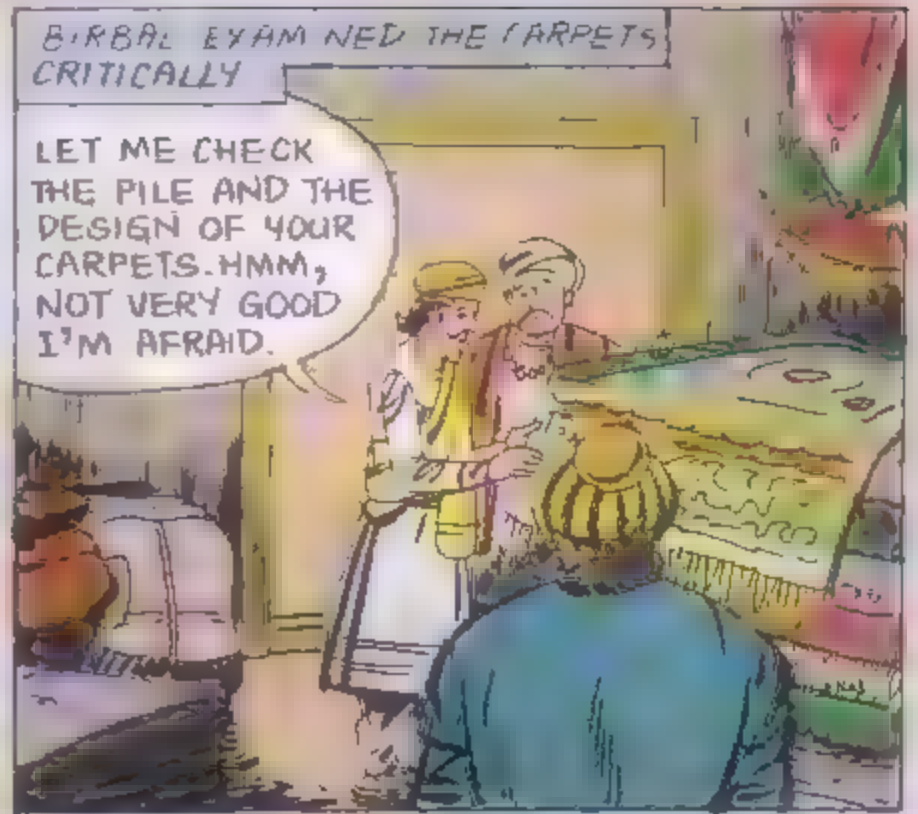
MUNIMJI, JUST CHECK THE GOODS FOR THEIR WORTH

SHOW US SOME SAMPLES.



BIRBAL EXAMINED THE CARPETS CRITICALLY

LET ME CHECK THE PILE AND THE DESIGN OF YOUR CARPETS. HMM, NOT VERY GOOD I'M AFRAID.



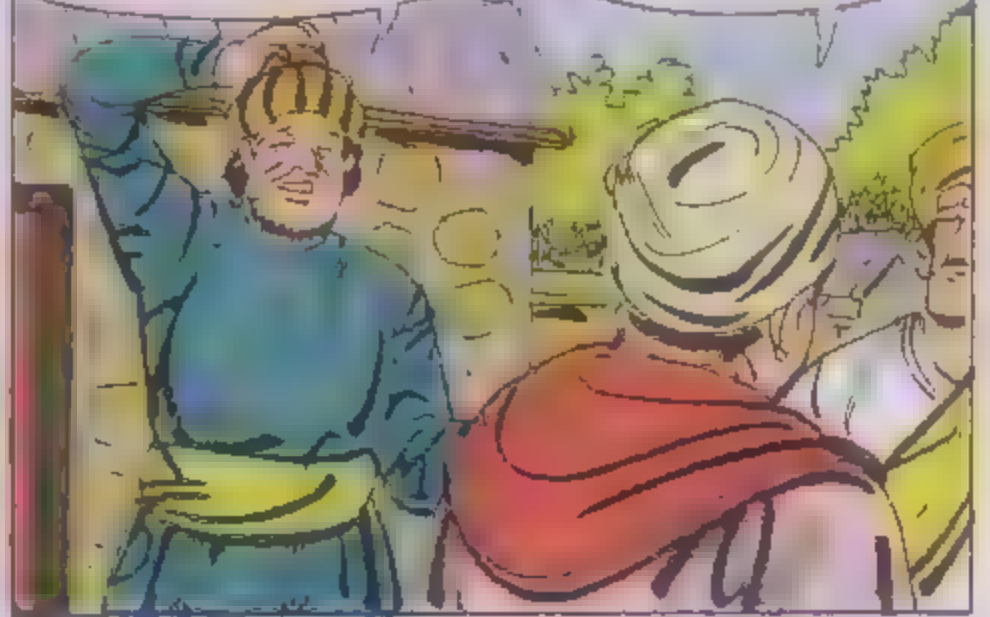
EVEN FIVE THOUSAND IS TOO MUCH FOR THESE INFERIOR QUALITY CARPETS.

YES, YOU ARE RIGHT. WE SHOULDN'T PAY MORE THAN THREE THOUSAND



WELL, IF THAT'S THE MAXIMUM YOU ARE READY TO PAY, I'LL HAVE TO ACCEPT IT

AGREED. WE'LL COME TOMORROW TO COLLECT THE GOODS AND PAY THE MONEY



NOW THE TWO WENT TO THE INN WHERE THE TRADER WAS STAYING

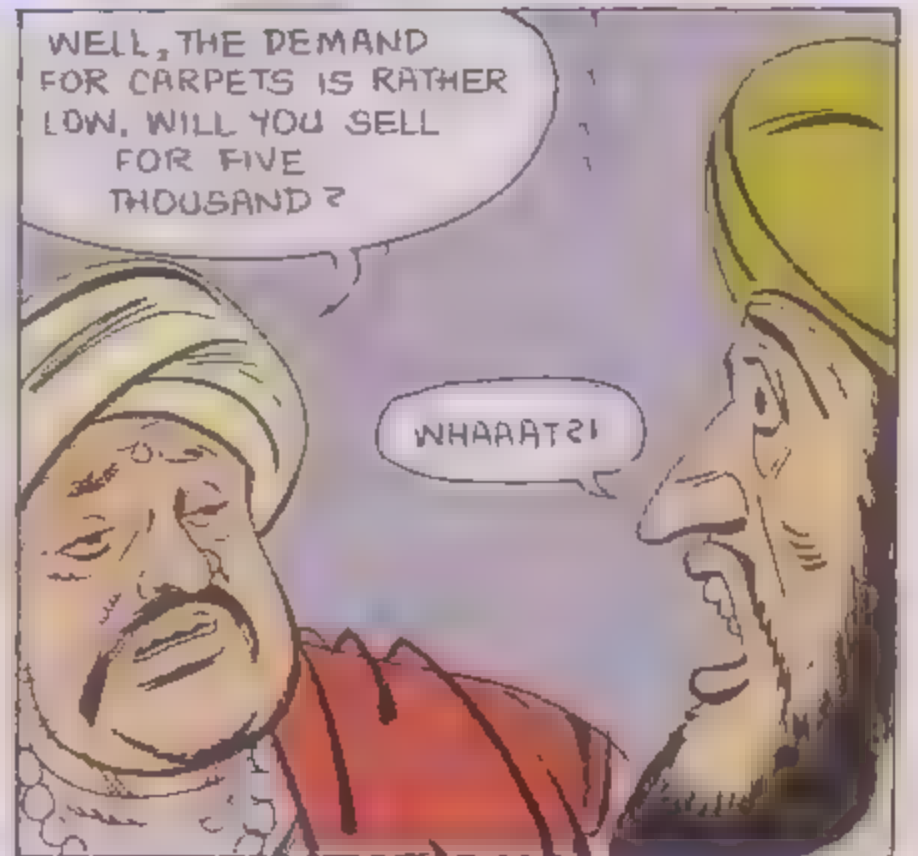
I HEARD YOU HAVE BROUGHT GOODS WORTH 10,000 FOR SALE

THEY ARE THE FINEST OF CARPETS.

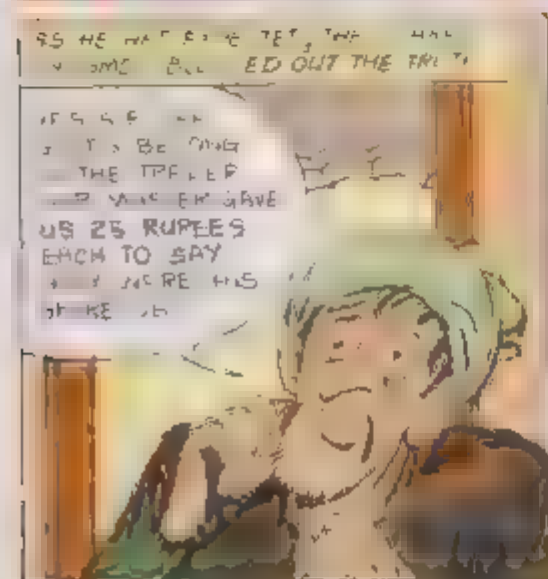
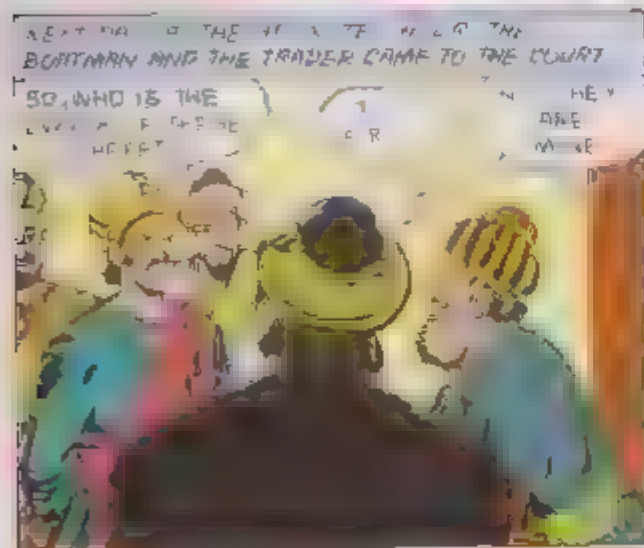


WELL, THE DEMAND FOR CARPETS IS RATHER LOW. WILL YOU SELL FOR FIVE THOUSAND?

WHAAAT?



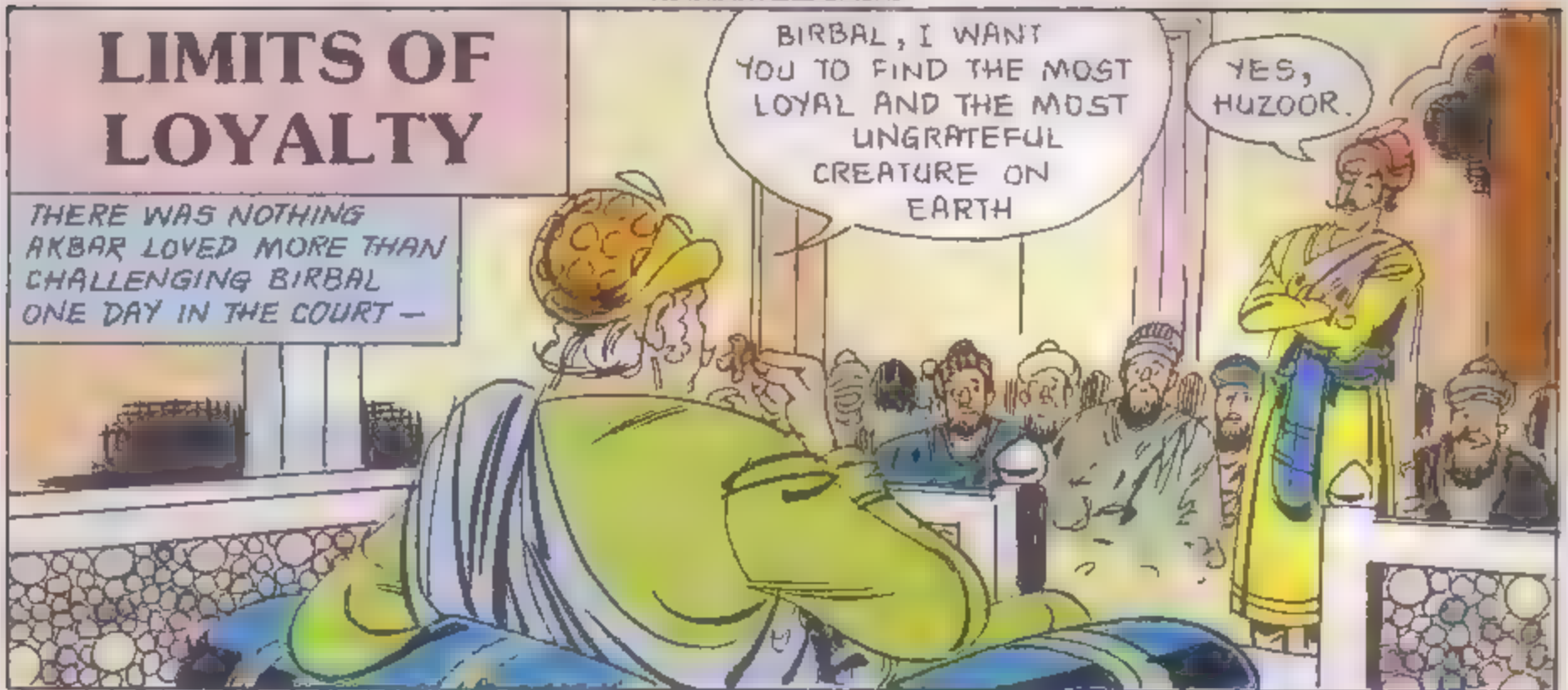






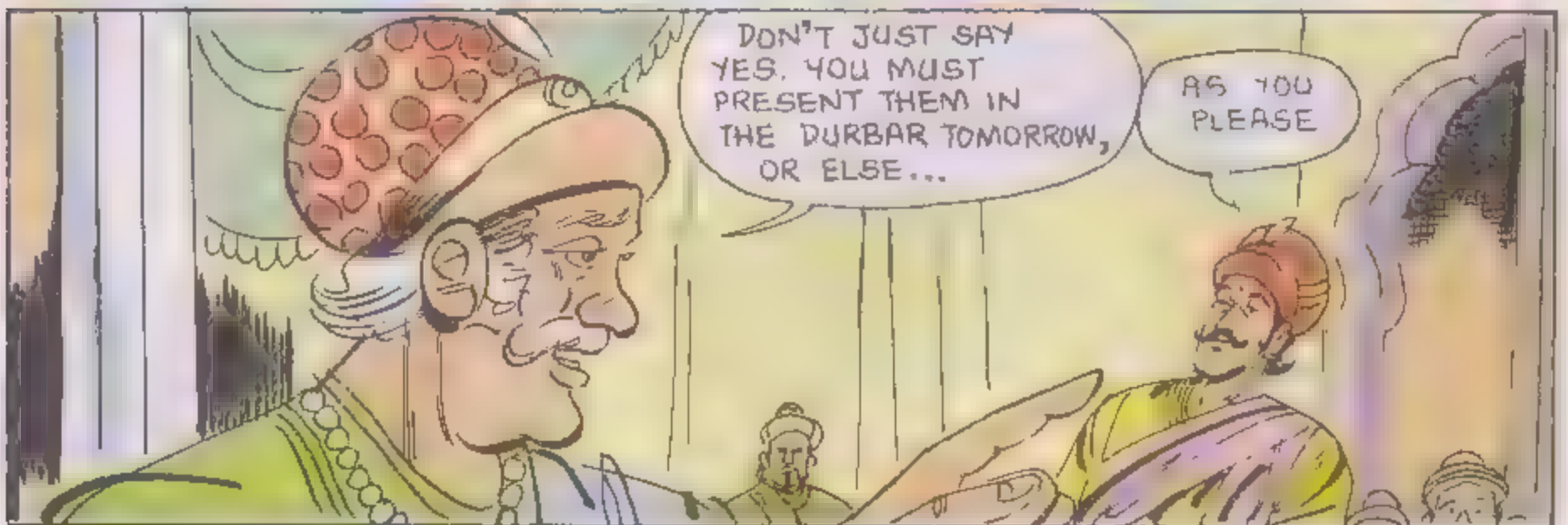
# LIMITS OF LOYALTY

THERE WAS NOTHING AKBAR LOVED MORE THAN CHALLENGING BIRBAL ONE DAY IN THE COURT —



BIRBAL, I WANT YOU TO FIND THE MOST LOYAL AND THE MOST UNGRATEFUL CREATURE ON EARTH

YES, HUZOOR.



DON'T JUST SAY YES. YOU MUST PRESENT THEM IN THE DURBAR TOMORROW, OR ELSE...

AS YOU PLEASE

BIRBAL AGREED TO DO AS ASKED BUT ON GOING HOME, HIS DAUGHTER SAID —



FATHER, YOU SEEM TO BE WORRIED. YOU'VE BEEN STARING AT THE CEILING FOR THE LAST HALF HOUR

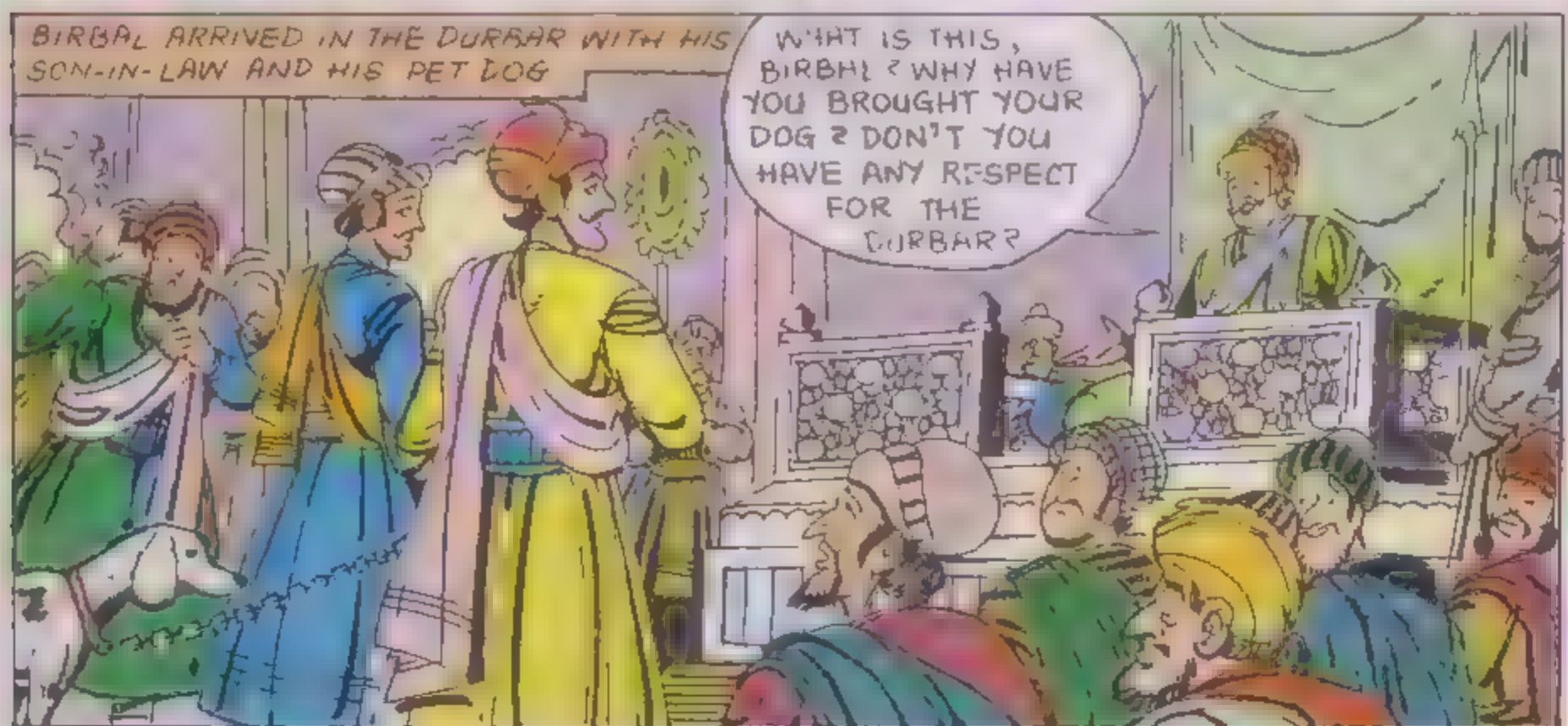
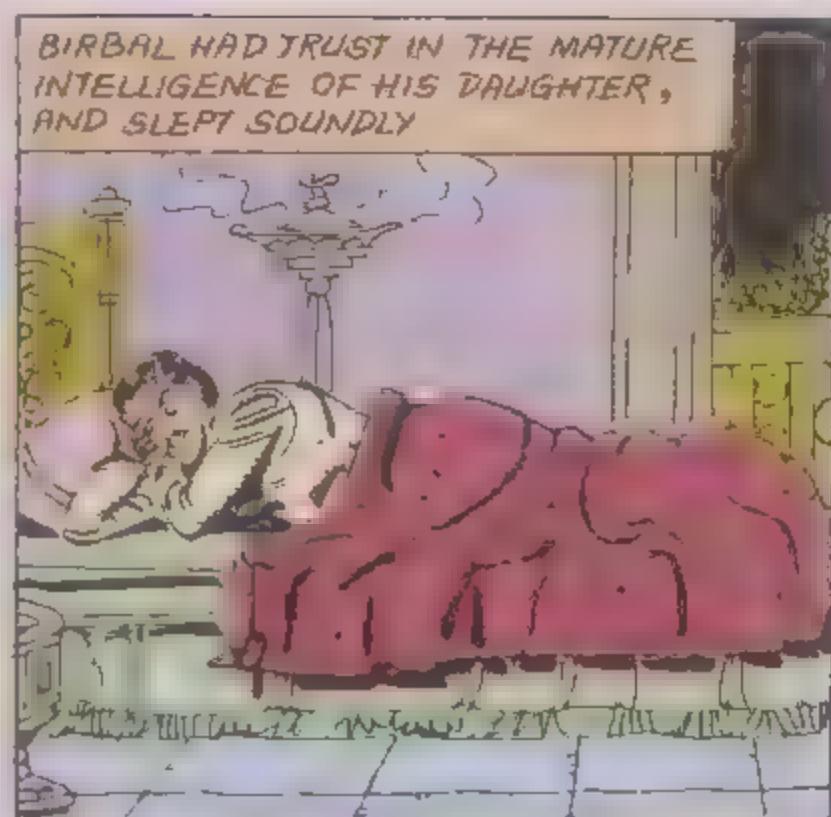
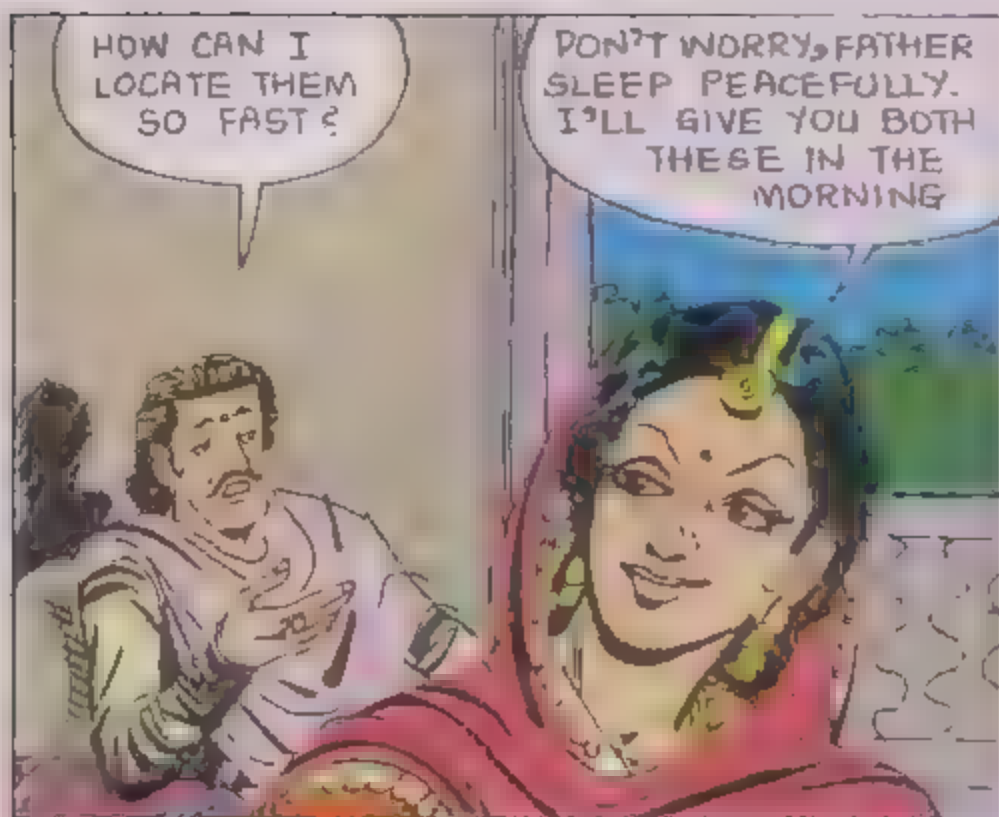
YES, I AM A LITTLE DISTURBED



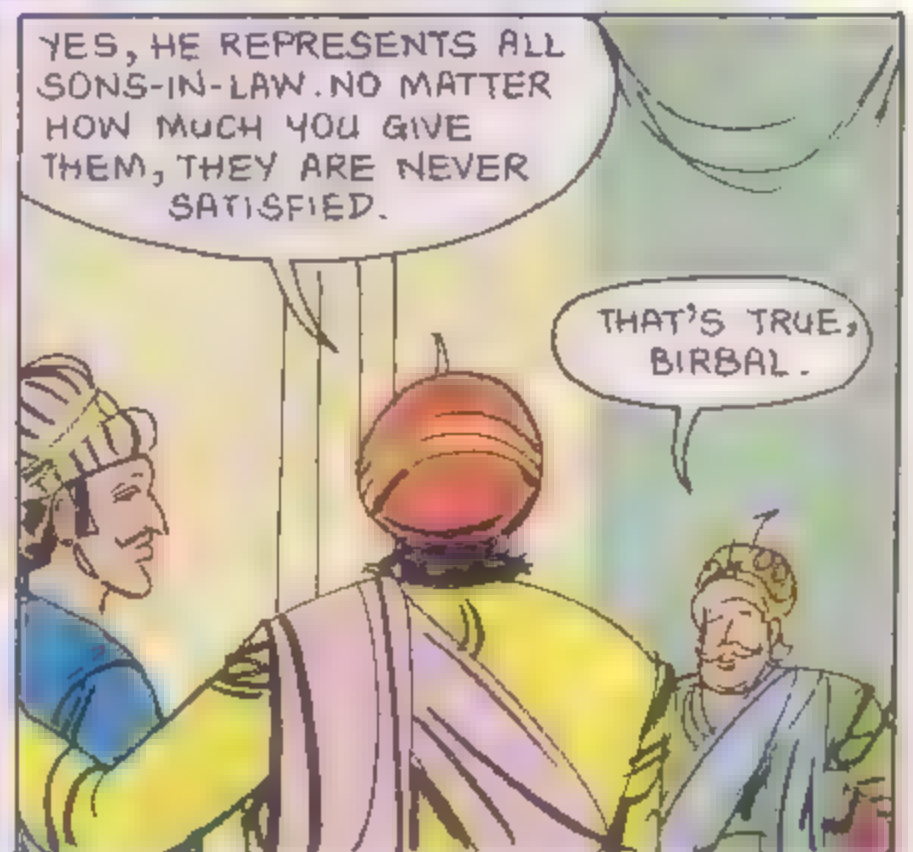
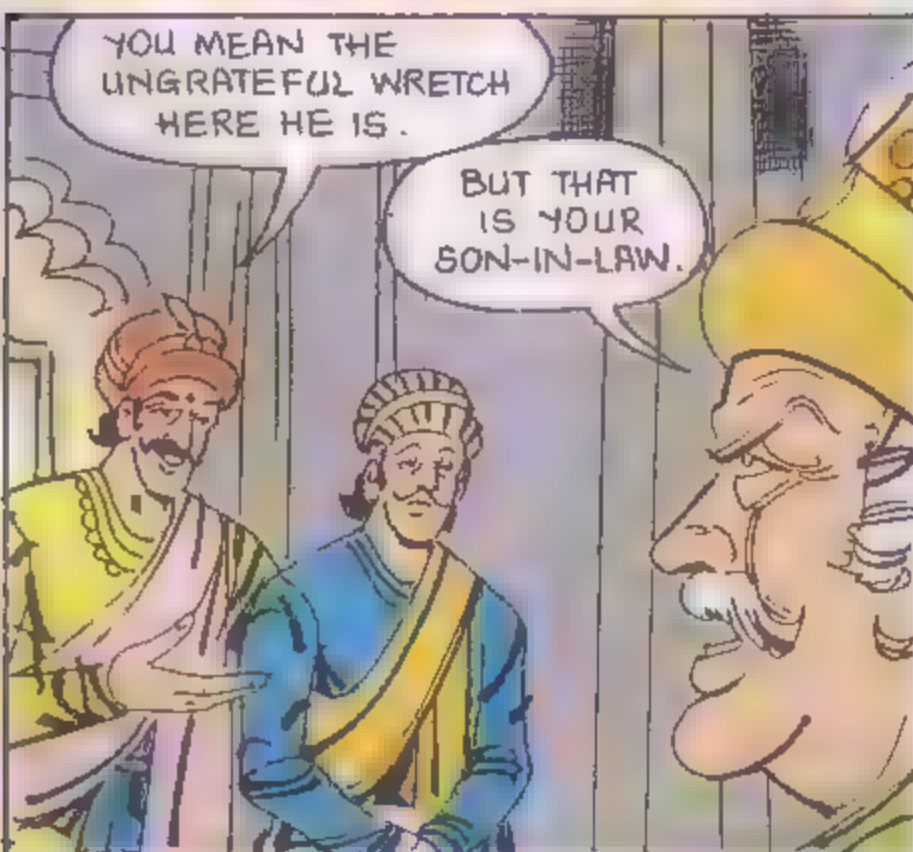
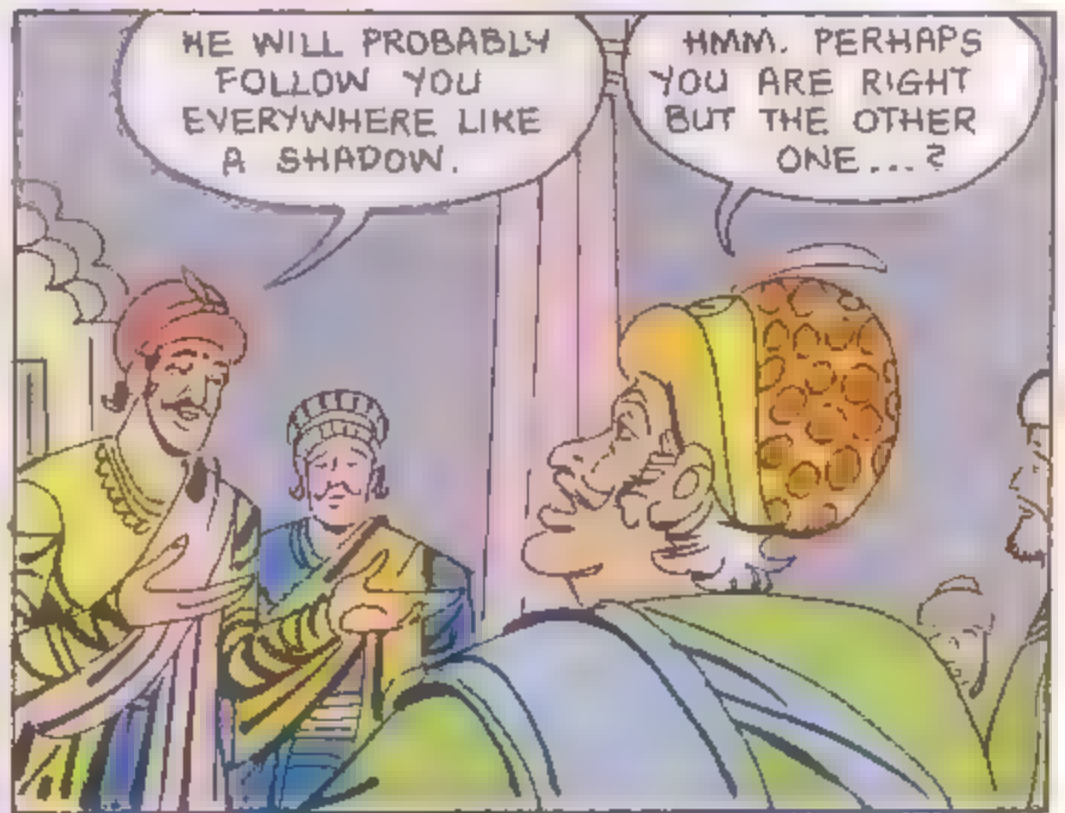
IS IT A PROBLEM POSED BY THE EMPEROR?

YES, HE WANTS ME TO BRING HIM THE MOST LOYAL AND THE MOST UNGRATEFUL CREATURE BY TOMORROW MORNING.

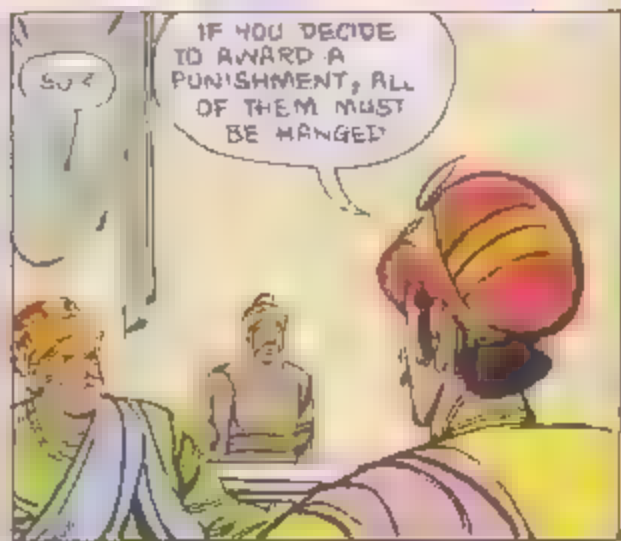














# AND OFF IT FLEW

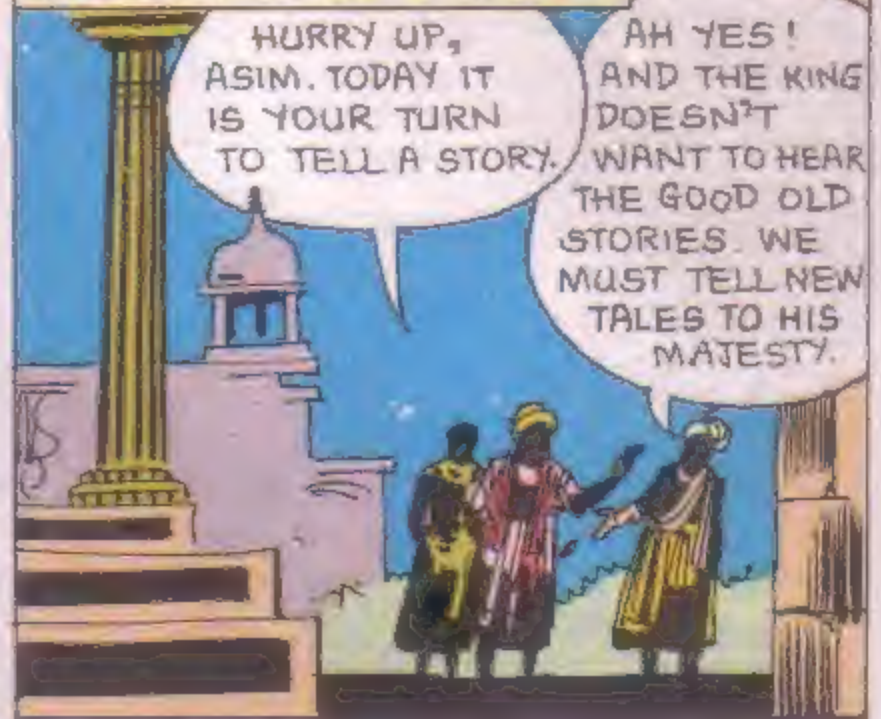
AKBAR WAS FOND OF STORIES. HE COULD NOT SLEEP UNLESS HE LISTENED TO A NEW TALE EVERY NIGHT.



ONE BY ONE, HIS COURTIERS WOULD BE SUMMONED.

HURRY UP, ASIM. TODAY IT IS YOUR TURN TO TELL A STORY.

AH YES! AND THE KING DOESN'T WANT TO HEAR THE GOOD OLD STORIES. WE MUST TELL NEW TALES TO HIS MAJESTY.



ONE EVENING, IT WAS BIRBAL'S TURN. BIRBAL WOULD SPIN A LONG YARN. EACH TIME HE PAUSED FOR BREATH—

AND THEN?

ALL HE HAS TO SAY IS 'AND THEN?' IT'S MY POOR JAW THAT GETS WEARY TALKING.



I MUST CURE HIM OF THIS HABIT OF HIS. HOW CAN WE FIND ENDLESS NEW STORIES EVERY DAY?



BIRBAL WAITED PATIENTLY TILL HIS TURN CAME AGAIN.

COME BIRBAL, I AM FEELING RESTLESS. TELL ME A REALLY LONG STORY TONIGHT.

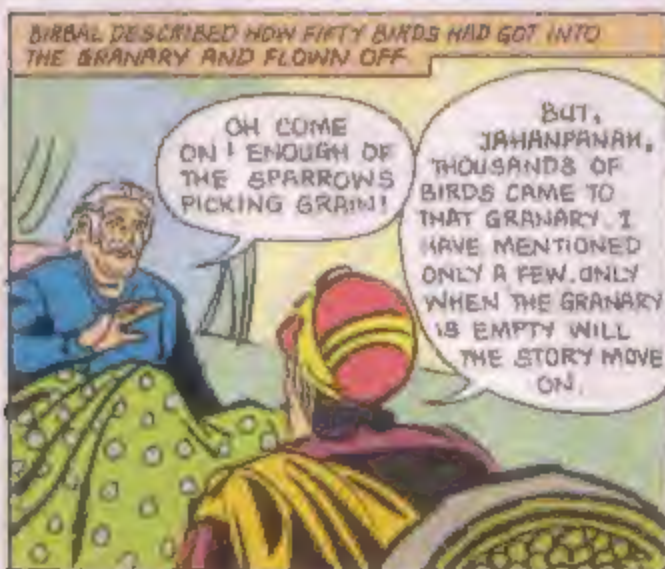
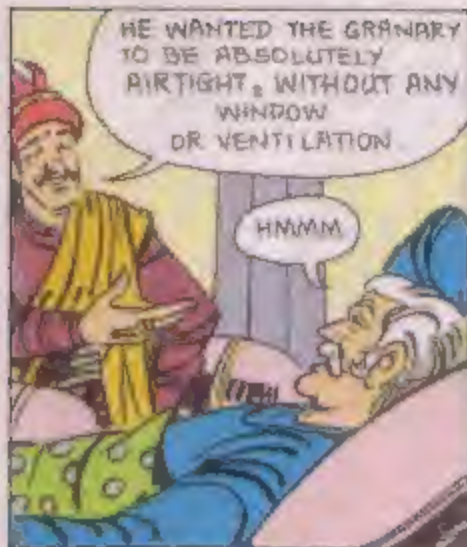


BIRBAL SETTLED DOWN COMFORTABLY AND BEGAN.

ONE DAY, A RICH FARMER ORDERED A GRANARY TO BE MADE.







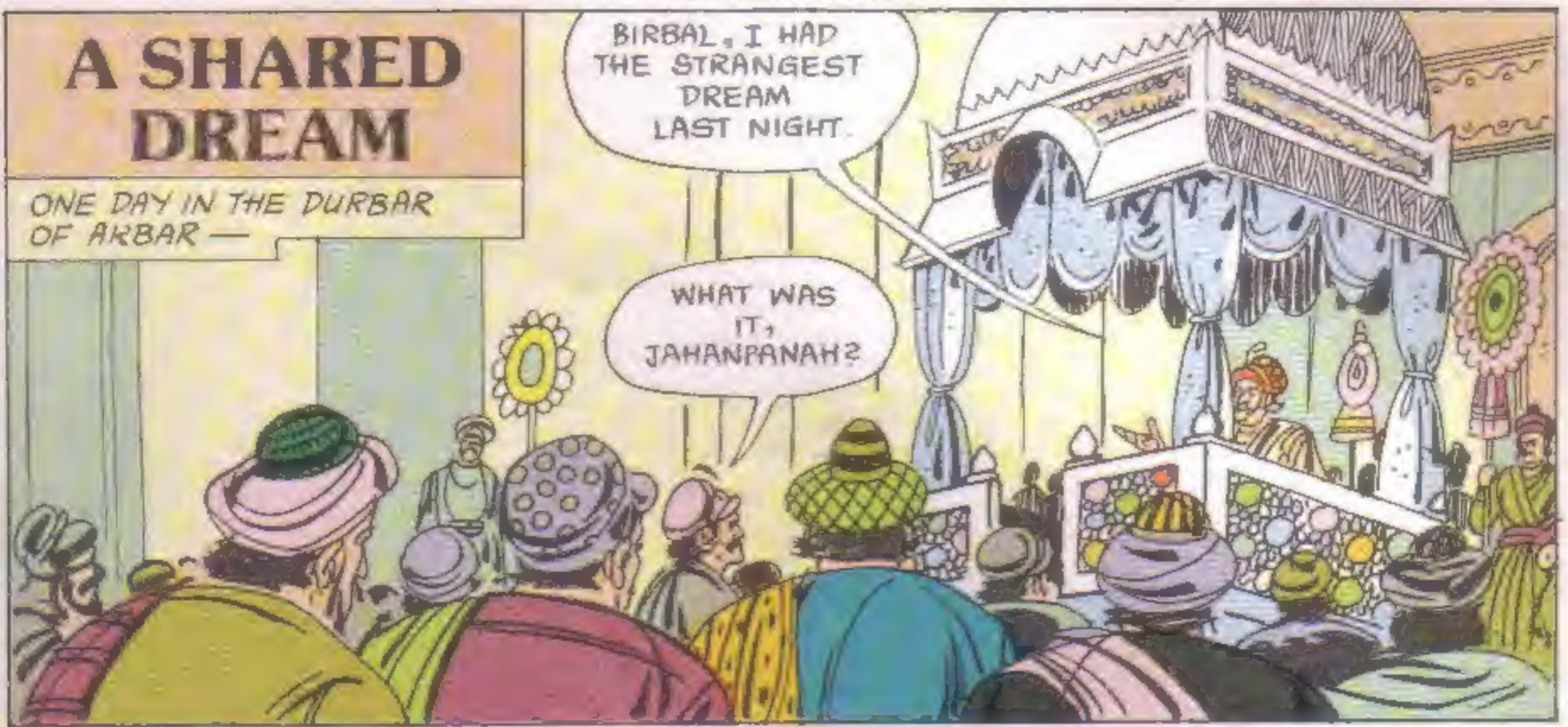


# A SHARED DREAM

ONE DAY IN THE DURBAR OF ARBAR —

BIRBAL, I HAD THE STRANGEST DREAM LAST NIGHT.

WHAT WAS IT, JAHANPANA?



WE WERE BOTH FLOATING IN THE SKY LIKE CLOUDS.



THEN SUDDENLY WE BOTH FELL DOWN WITH A BANG.



I FELL INTO A BIG PIT FILLED WITH HONEY.



BUT YOU, BIRBAL, FELL INTO A GUTTER.

HUH!





